Facts
from GTA

Easy Access to Government: Georgia's State Government Portal

The vision: a citizen-centered Georgia government that runs like a successful business – easy to use, both from the inside and the outside. Georgia's portal, www.georgia,gov, serves as a single point of access to government information and services. People using the portal do not have to know the names or particular functions of government agencies. They can access the information they want anytime, with the assurance that their privacy is protected. The portal was launched in July 2002, and new services are brought online continually as programs are developed.

On the road to online convenience

The Georgia Technology Authority (GTA) and the Department of Motor Vehicle Safety (DMVS) worked together on the first service available on the portal. The Georgia drivers' portal allows people to renew their license online or by phone at any time of day they choose, without going to a DMVS office. More than 40,000 Georgians have renewed their licenses online or by phone since the service debuted in July 2002.

Another service enables parents to check the status of child support payments online. "Where's My Child's Check?" was developed by the Georgia Department of Human Resources and the GTA and made available to a limited number of parents beginning in October 2002. In March 2003, more than 200,000 parents received notices about the service and an identification number for accessing their child's information. In May alone, parents visited the site more than 62,000 times.

A more recent addition to the portal enables Georgia business owners to apply online for a state sales tax identification number and a Federal Employee Identification number at the same time, dramatically reducing turnaround time. GTA and the Georgia Department of Revenue collaborated with the federal Small Business Administration to make the service available.

Cutting-edge technology makes it happen

The portal's most innovative feature is its interoperability architecture. It uses Web Services to integrate information from different computer systems in Georgia state government. Using industry standards such as XML (Extensible Markup Language) and SOAP (Simple Object Access Protocol) to provide seamless interoperability that organizes transactions around the intentions of citizens and businesses. The portal architecture allows the state to use new

standards-based products and emerging technologies.

Increasing government efficiency

An increasing number of state agencies are adding their information and services to the portal, enabling users to move easily from the state home page to agencies and divisions throughout state government. Through the portal, state agencies are able to more rapidly establish online services using common components for functions such as processing credit cards, updating demographic information and accessing geographic information. Cost savings will result from sharing components, and staff will be able to concentrate on providing the service itself, rather than the electronic access.

Clarity and convenience are key

The design of georgia.gov is the result of extensive research. Input came from a broad range of sources, including four consumer focus groups conducted in Savannah and Atlanta, more than 140 state government employees, 300 respondents to an online survey, and interviews with local government officials.

Participants' input is evident in the portal's design. Pull-down menus under "I want to…" and "How do I…" help users easily find what they're looking for. Security and privacy information is clearly displayed. A changing variety of Georgia photos keeps the site interesting and appealing.

Help when you need it

The georgia.gov Contact Center offers people using the state portal find the information they need quickly and efficiently. Assistance is available by e-mail at help@georgia.gov or by phone, 404-818-6600 in metro Atlanta, or 866-351-0001 statewide toll-free. The center operates Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

A new choice

The portal is not only a Web site, but also includes an agency office, a call center, an information kiosk or any other means people use to obtain services. The portal's self-service approach will free staff to help people by mail, phone or in person.